

Today we have an opportunity to do that for the very first time.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to take you back to where I began, and that is that we have a choice in this country. We can focus on the things that divide us all day every day. We can do it. I still believe there is more that unites us as a nation than divides us as a nation, but if you choose to spend your time talking about those things that divide us, you can fill up a day.

If you choose to spend your time talking about those things that are broken yet proffering no solutions to fix them, you can fill up a day. If you choose to spend your day talking about why everybody else is a lazy son of a gun and only you have access to the truth, you can fill up a day, and then a week, and then a month, and then a year, and then a Presidential cycle, and then a decade, and then a generation.

But, Mr. Speaker, if you will recognize that working together we have already passed more laws in 2017 than any other Congress and President working together since Harry Truman, if you will recognize that we have taken the uncertainty out of the Supreme Court—we fully staffed the Supreme Court so that uncertainty in the legal arena will exist no longer—if you recognize that a thorny issue like illegal immigration that has been made so difficult to solve because we haven't been able to figure out how to deal with the border security aspect so that we can go on and deal with the other thorny issues, those border crossings are down, which means our opportunity has increased for dealing with these problems that have plagued our Nation for so long.

I can give you one example of that, Mr. Speaker. I am going to digress.

I have got a family in my district trying to bring a relative into the country from Haiti. They have been working on it for 11 years—11 years. All the talk that goes on in this body about immigration, nobody is taking about helping my constituents from Haiti. Nobody is talking about passing a law to make it easier to get your family member in from Haiti. Nobody is talking about those families that have been separated while trying to follow the law of the land. Nobody is talking about those families that have paid out of pocket to go through the legal process—all the time, all the money, all the delay to do it the right way. Nobody is talking about fixing it for those families.

Let's fix it for those families because we all agree there is a better way. If you want to get your adult child in from Mexico, Mr. Speaker, you needed to file your paperwork in 1993 for their number to be coming up today—1993, to do it the right way and have their number to come up today.

Who believes a 25-year process to bring a family member into this country is the right answer? Of course folks are going to do it the wrong way.

If you want to bring your adult brother or sister in from the Philippines, you had to file in 1994 for their number to be coming up legally today. Who believes that is the right system?

The system is broken. We don't have enough trust together to repair the system. By eliminating the illegal border crossing's immediate challenge, the President has created the headroom for us to work together on issues that we can absolutely solve.

728. Mr. Speaker, the number of millions of dollars saved in contract negotiations thus far—in fact, not even thus far, but contract negotiations on one single Pentagon project that the President has inserted himself in.

For all the things you may think the President knows, doesn't know, you agree with, you disagree with, you have to know that he knows how to drive a hard bargain. You have to know that he knows how to negotiate big contracts.

The American taxpayer is not satisfied with the way we have been doing it, with the way former White Houses have been doing it. We have an opportunity to come together and do it better, and the President is leading us in that way.

And that all culminates, Mr. Speaker, in 16. That is the number of years since consumer confidence in this country was at its current levels. You can do that math if you would like, Mr. Speaker. It will take you back through an entire 8 years of Democratic control of the White House, and it will take you back through an entire 8 years of Republican control of the White House.

The American consumer does not care whether you are a Republican or a Democrat. The American consumer cares whether or not they think their job is secure.

The American consumer does not care if you are a Republican or a Democrat. The American consumer cares whether prices are higher tomorrow or lower tomorrow.

The American consumer does not care about our petty, silly, inside-the-beltway Washington arguments. They care about whether America is going to be stronger for their children and grandchildren a generation from now. And it has been 16 years since American consumers have the optimism that they have today.

I will say it again, Mr. Speaker. We can consume every second of every day in this body fussing, griping, complaining—there are lots of things that are wrong and lots of folks to blame for it—or we can recognize the big hopes and dreams that the American people have placed on this President and this Congress and this time in our history. We can recognize that there is still more that unites us in this country than divides us in this country. We can still recognize that folks care very little about us and our families and care so very much about their community and their families.

With that as our touchstone, Mr. Speaker, call me an irrational opti-

mist, but I think there is absolutely nothing that we can't do together, and I look forward to playing a role in that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S TAX PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Washington?

There was no objection.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, this Special Order is for the Congressional Progressive Caucus, and I am so proud to be a vice chair of that caucus and to lead the Special Order hour with my colleague, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN).

We do this once a week, and we try to take up topics that we think are of great interest across the country to our constituency. So I am very proud to have the Congressional Progressive Caucus leading the way on so many issues that are important, from education to transportation, infrastructure to, of course, today's topic, which is the tax plan that was released yesterday by President Trump.

The tax plan that was released yesterday—and I have to start by saying I am not sure this is actually the plan. I am not sure that a one-page document constitutes a plan. This is not even a two-sided document. It is a one-sided document. This is what we are reacting to. And it is similar to the tax plan that candidate Trump spoke about during the campaign.

So we will do our best with what has been put forward as a plan, but this plan, in our estimation, when you look at what it contains, really amounts to nothing more than a one-page document full of handouts to the rich.

The Secretary of the Treasury, Steve Mnuchin, yesterday said, during a press conference, that one thing that this President has done very well—this is a quote: "One thing this President has done very well is listen."

Mr. Speaker, I have to disagree with that. Two weekends ago, there were 190,000 Americans in red States and blue States across the country who were on the streets asking for the President to release his tax returns in the same way that every other President of the United States has done in modern history. Unfortunately, this President has not listened. As a candidate, he said he would release his tax returns. As a President, he has refused to do so.

He didn't listen when women and their allies took to the streets in the biggest march in American history to demand that he respect women, protect Planned Parenthood, and support equal rights for women.

And this President certainly didn't listen to the millions of Americans who were outspoken in their opposition to the Republican healthcare plan that essentially took \$1 trillion off of the backs of working people and folks who need health care across this country and transferred it to the wealthiest in our country.

The reality is this President, unfortunately, has not been listening to the American people. If you look at that healthcare plan, just as an example, only 17 percent of the American public actually supported TrumpCare. This President has not been listening, to now put forward another plan on health care that again suggests that we should actually take away essential health benefits from people, take away the opportunity for people to have pre-existing conditions covered, and, once again, leaving an additional 24 million Americans stripped of their health care.

□ 1630

So in this tax press conference yesterday, it became very clear that the administration doesn't have really an idea of exactly what the plan is going to look like, except for the fact that it will be good for business.

Secretary Mnuchin said:

"Under the Trump plan, we will have a massive tax cut for businesses. . . ."

Despite all of President Trump's broken promises, we have to believe that this may actually be true. Let's not forget that the Secretary of the Treasury was a C-level executive at Goldman Sachs and his loyalties have been with Big Business.

The tax plan, as we have been given it on this one-page document, is a gift-wrapped tax cut to the highest earners and corporations. The claim is that it was written to create jobs and spur economic growth and help low- and middle-income families, but what it really does is drastically reduce tax rates for Big Business to just 15 percent. That tax break isn't just for corporations; it is also for pass-through firms.

Let's be clear about what pass-through firms are. Pass-through firms are entities that wealthy people and companies use in order to funnel money and have lower tax rates. Among these companies is The Trump Organization.

This is why, in asking for the President's tax returns, this is not just an ask that doesn't have any meaning. It is not a partisan ask. We have 190,000 Americans in the streets in red States and blue States asking. When we know what is in the President's tax returns, then we have the ability to make sure that we understand, as the American people, whether any plan he proposes is

in the interest of the American people or whether it is in his own financial interest.

According to the Center for American Progress, 70 percent of partnership and S corporation income goes to the top 1 percent of U.S. households by income. So when you propose a tax cut for these pass-through entities, we are talking about a tax cut for the people in the top 1 percent of this country. We are not talking about a tax cut that benefits middle class, working families.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities provided a specific example where a lawyer making \$1 million a year could funnel their income through that pass-through and could actually save \$180,000 a year. There is no doubt that this President would himself benefit from this tax plan, although we can't say exactly how much, because we haven't seen the tax returns and we don't know exactly which financial interests he has and how much he would benefit.

However, his own lawyers reported that nearly all of his 500 or so businesses are—don't be surprised—pass-throughs. If we accept this assertion from his lawyers that his assets are worth more than \$10 billion, then this tax plan or tax ploy, depending on how you want to see it, would actually save the President of the United States millions of dollars, but it would not benefit millions of working families across this country who actually need to see our tax system reform so that it is more fair.

When asked how these tax cuts were paid for, Secretary Mnuchin said they would be so effective at bolstering the economy that it would pay for itself. Now, we have seen trickle-down economics before in this country, and it is a nonsensical idea that this tax plan would bolster the economy. We have seen the disastrous effects of trickle-down economics specifically on low-income and middle-income families.

The Tax Foundation estimates that reducing the business rate for companies and pass-throughs to 15 percent would actually reduce revenue in this country by \$3.5 trillion over 10 years. They also found that, at the very best, the plan would only spur enough growth to pay for less than half the cost of the tax cuts. Low- and middle-income Americans would ultimately pay the price, not Big Business.

Now, this is similar to what we saw in the healthcare plan. In the healthcare plan, if you remember, what we saw was a proposal to cut \$880 billion from Medicaid and take that money and essentially give a trillion dollars in tax cuts to the wealthiest. So if you were in the top 4 percent of income earners in this country, you would have gotten a tax cut of about \$200,000 a year. But if you were in that age that we like to call seniors, between 50 and 64, you would have an age tax and you would have to pay up to \$15,000 more on your premiums. So that is why some of my colleagues across

the aisle actually called that healthcare plan a downpayment on a tax plan. It was supposed to be the beginning of a tax reform plan that, again, moved more money to the wealthiest in our country.

We are seeing a State-level microcosm of this playing out right now in the State of Kansas where the State passed massive tax cuts, including exempting pass-throughs from State taxes.

The result?

More than 333,000 residents changed their income to funnel through pass-throughs in the first year alone.

What happened in Kansas when this was pushed through?

State revenue went down by an additional almost 2 percent, costing \$206 million in 2013 and \$472 million the following year.

Today, the State faces a \$1.1 billion shortfall, and residents are paying the price in lost programming and services. But the promise that was made at the time that this plan was pushed through in Kansas—the same kind of plan that is being proposed today at the Federal level—the promise that was made was that it would kick-start the economy. Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, that hasn't happened either. Economic growth in Kansas is happening at just half the national average.

Because here is the thing: tax cuts don't just pay for themselves, and there are plenty of experts on both sides of the aisle that will attest to that. A sheet of paper is not a plan, and everyone knows it.

When reporters pressed Secretary Mnuchin and the National Economic Council Director Gary Cohn for details, they failed to provide anything of substance. A reporter asked Cohn three times what the tax cut would look like for a family of four making \$60,000 per year.

I have a lot of those families, Mr. Speaker, in my district. I believe we have those families in red States and blue States, working people across this country who believe that America should be and must be a land of opportunity for people who work hard. Maybe they are not the richest people in the world. Maybe they are not the richest top 1 percent in this country. But they work hard, they earn a good living, and they deserve to have fairness in our tax plan.

Now, when Mr. Cohn was asked three times by this reporter what the tax cut would look like for a family of four making \$60,000 a year, he replied it is "gonna mean a tax cut" three times in a row. Instead of getting answers, though, and when he was pressed, reporters were told over and over again that they would get more information later and that the administration is in "robust talks."

Well, I am a Member of the House, and supposedly those robust talks are happening with the House and the Senate. We all represent the people of the United States. We want to all be a part

of the conversation, and we demand to know specifically, as we look at this plan, how this President, his family, and his Cabinet will benefit from the tax plan. That is only fair, Mr. Speaker, that we understand exactly how this tax plan would benefit the person who is proposing the tax plan.

Is this tax plan for the American people to see relief, or is it for the President and his best friends to see relief?

The reality is that this is about an issue of trust. The American people deserve to know whether they can trust this President and this administration to act on their behalf. So far, unfortunately, this administration has continued to throw the middle class under the bus, whether it is threatening to cut funding for Meals on Wheels, which is part of the budget proposal in cutting the CDBG programs, or whether it is in proposing a healthcare plan that cuts vital health care from millions of Americans. So we are intent to stay extremely vigilant.

I see that we have a couple of colleagues from the Progressive Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), a colleague on the Judiciary Committee, a strong champion for working people in Texas and across our country.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL) for yielding and for her leadership on this Special Order.

I will take just a moment of the gentlewoman's time because I think she has captured the essence of the frustration, not that Members of Congress have, but that the American people have. So I wanted to make sure that I shared some of the contrasts that we have between what has happened yesterday and the announcement of the administration of Mr. Trump's tax proposal, which, in essence, is really a bowl of horror. It is a continuation of an ineffective 100 days, and the fear that I have is that it was rushed and put together to meet this really unnecessary standard or unnecessary test of 100 days, one that was so pronounced during Mr. Trump's campaign in contrast to Mr. Clinton, Mr. Bush, and Mr. Obama, the last three Presidents that we have as examples.

What is in the first 100 days?

The first 100 days should be working. You should be working every day and you should have to account or you should be able to account for the successes that you have done in the normal course of work. Methodically, you can check off the good that you have done for the American people; that it comes naturally, that you have been methodical, that you have worked with Congress, that you worked with your executives, that you have looked to see what can be improved.

All that we can see is what has been destroyed or dismantled or taxed or ridiculed. There is nothing that advances the American people.

Certainly, the healthcare bill was ridiculing the American people. It was ridiculous. \$880 billion was taken from Medicaid; \$600 billion was to be used for tax cuts, which they do not have at this point. We fear that they will be rushing through such a bill in the next couple of days.

More importantly, where was the commitment to all of the promises?

So let me just speak to two particular points.

The economic security of women, what has happened under this administration?

Blocking expanded overtime pay, which disproportionately benefits women workers. Failing to advance equal pay, paid family leave, and affordable childcare legislation, talking about it but doing nothing.

Endangering retirement security by blocking a rule requiring retirement advisers to put clients first.

Can you imagine?

Senior citizens have helped build this country, and you would deny them adequate counsel on their retirement. That has happened.

All of these have happened under the Trump administration: proposing severe cuts to the Department of Labor, which would hinder enforcement of family and medical leave. Of course, cutting Meals on Wheels, as has been indicated. Cutting the National Institutes of Health. Major lifesaving research down the drain. Scientists looking for other countries to go to because they have no room at the inn.

And then making student debt harder to pay off by rescinding a rule that limits the fees that loan companies can charge its borrowers. Remember, those borrowers are 18, 19, 20, 21 years old. They are the next generation or the current generation of the builders of this economy and this society.

Then to add insult to injury, if I might say, yesterday a big pronouncement announced over the weekend the biggest, fattest tax cut you could ever have or tax reform that you would ever have. Of course, everyone knows in America this is not tax reform. This is a simple bunch of tax cuts that will have a competition between debt and deficit. This will be a spiraling downward trend digging America into the deepest hole of debt and deficit in the history of the United States.

Trillions of dollars spent on individuals and corporations that do not need it.

How do I know?

I have spoken to them, and there is a whole litany of corporate issues that are not being answered.

For example, the idea of being able to deduct interest payments is nowhere to be found. That might help middle class working families, as well as corporations and small businesses.

What you have is trickle-down economics. President Trump's tax plan is built on the same trickle-down economics that withered inequality and undermined working families.

There are massive tax breaks for Trump himself. In the course of his days that he may have paid taxes—and let me be very clear that we don't know what impact this tax bill would have on him because we do not have his tax returns. But we do know, in the last time we have records, he had to pay \$39 million in taxes because of the alternative minimum tax put in place in 1986 by President Reagan.

Can you imagine?

If there was not the AMT—alternative minimum tax—he would be paying \$5 million.

□ 1645

Well, ladies and gentlemen, my dear colleagues, they have eliminated in this tax bill the AMT. That sounds suspicious, and it shouldn't sound suspicious. It is suspicious, and the reality of it is it is self-promoting and self-happening.

Then, of course, these tax cuts are moving the corporate rate from 35 to 15. Let me make a breaking news announcement. Most corporations pay about 14, but with the 35 moved to 15, maybe they will pay zero.

Who is going to be part of the overall supporting and investment in this Nation, to build our infrastructure, to create jobs, to build the new level of energy, new technology, to ensure that health care is provided for those who need it, to make sure that the Affordable Care Act continues to cover the millions of people that need it instead of cutting 24 million people?

Well, with the tax cuts in place, there is a rush to judgment. That judgment is a pronouncement of a complete deficit hole for the American people. That is what this tax cut does. There are no benefits for working class Americans or middle class Americans. There is no incentive to create jobs. In fact, I have no idea what the thinking or planning was that went into the President's tax plan.

All I know is that the American people who get up every day and go to work, or those who get up every day and get three or four buses to go to work—and part of the time that they are going to work, they have to drop off their children at a school that may not be in their neighborhood because there is a need for more investment in education. All I know is that those people whom I am so proud to be able to represent, as well as large businesses and small businesses that, I believe, as I have listened to corporate leaders just a few hours ago saying, "We are with you all. We want what is best for America. This is not what we desire, not to give all to us or the top 1 percent. We want to help America grow because, as America grows, our companies thrive, our shareholders thrive," that is not the message of this administration.

So I am delighted to join the Congressional Progressive Caucus to ask the question of the Trump administration: Are you so worried about the 100

days that you cannot worry about the American people? Is 100 days more important than the mother who is traveling to work 3 and 4 hours? Is 100 days more important than the traveling salesmen who need the kind of infrastructure and roads that work? or those in southern America that need the kind of rural electric system that helps them? or those that need clean energy? or those that need research for the next cure for sickle cell anemia?

Is your 100 days so important that you cannot provide resources for law enforcement and firefighters and first responders, that you cannot provide help for the national parks, the National Endowment for the Arts, and you cannot provide direction to the Department of Justice, which has turned itself into the injustice, unjust department, exploring ideas of taking away civil rights, denying individuals their rights as citizens in the United States in terms of discrimination and equality, opportunity or, in actuality, creating the one thing that you can be proud of, and that is the deportation task force that is demonizing hardworking individuals who simply want an opportunity for their families?

So I would only say that I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me, and I thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN), as well, for his presence here and others that will come and ask the question: Are all these people that we have listed less important than your 100 days? I am saddened if the answer is yes.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleague Congresswoman PRAMILA JAYAPAL and who is leading tonight "Congressional Progressive Caucus Special Order the impact of President Trump's Tax Cut Plan."

As a member of the House Budget Committee, I would participate in any Committee's markup of a tax reform bill.

President Trump's much anticipated tax plan is another disappointment; a poor work product; something he should have been ashamed to put his name on; and it reveals yet again what many warned about before the election.

This President is unprepared for his office, and he shows either no capacity or interest in on the job training.

This tax plan in any school of business would get a failing grade.

A one page federal tax cut plan—really is an insult to the American People.

This plan shows no command of the facts regarding our nation's very complex tax system.

President Trump's tax plan, just as his healthcare reform proposal, and immigration reform proposal would hurt working families and disproportionately favor the wealthy and large corporations at the expense of the nation's middle class.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin set out a test for tax reform that, "there will be no absolute tax cut for the upper class."

But the president's tax plan has failed this test miserably by providing a huge tax cut for the wealthy while middle income families would receive very little benefit.

In fact, Trump's tax plan provides a huge tax benefit for him personally. Using his 2005

tax return numbers, President Trump would save about \$28.6 million in taxes under his plan.

About \$27 million of those savings is due to the reduction of the pass through income rate to 15%.

President Trump's tax proposal blows a hole in the nation's deficit.

It's become painfully obvious that the deficit only matters when a Democrat is President.

The plan is not revenue neutral. In fact, early press reports indicate that the Trump proposal is likely to add several trillions of dollars to our deficit.

Busting the deficit the way the Trump tax plan would do puts immediate pressure on our other obligations—including guaranteed Medicare benefits.

The President can't pretend to protect Medicare, then leave beneficiaries completely exposed by draining our coffers.

For some context, these tax cuts could fund Medicare for the next 75 years or more.

You have to question the priorities of the President—is he working to keep his promises to hardworking Americans, or is he abandoning those promises in favor of enriching the wealthy.

President Trump's tax proposal is a return to Reagan's failed supply side economics.

The evidence is clear: large tax cuts like this don't pay for themselves, despite the rhetoric we hear from this Administration. Just ask the conservative leaning Tax Foundation.

This broad outline—which lacks any kind of real detail—seems to simply be a repeat of the mistakes we made with President George W. Bush's tax cuts in 2001 and 2003, which cost us trillions of dollars, did nothing to help working families, and, in part, contributed to the Great Recession.

Democrats know that the Middle Class deserves the tax cut, not Donald Trump and his Cabinet.

We would focus on growing our economy from the middle out, instead of trickle-down economics from the top down.

The middle class does not need to lose their healthcare coverage provided by the Affordable Care Act.

The middle class does not need to deal with the consequence of a massive tax cut for the wealthy.

Any tax cut must be paid for by getting funding from somewhere else in the federal budget.

The source of funding to pay for the tax cuts under the failed repeal of the Affordable Care Act would have come from Medicare and Medicaid—hurting millions of people who would have lost access to health insurance coverage.

I am joining my colleagues this evening in strong opposition to this Administration's attempt to diminish the quality of life of working families by creating unfair burdens like funding ill-conceived tax cut plans.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for eloquently articulating so many of the issues that are in front of us right now, including, once again: What exactly is this administration doing for people across this country, both those who voted for him and those who didn't, but middle class Americans who are trying to make sure that this country stays a land of opportunity?

Mr. Speaker, so the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN), my distinguished vice chair and co-chair of this Special Order hour, may control the remainder of this hour, I yield back the balance of my time.

PRESIDENT TRUMP'S TAX PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congresswoman JAYAPAL for leading us in this Special Order to discuss President Trump's tax proposal, which we received this morning—or last night. The public discussion on taxes has been going on for several weeks now in anticipation of the release of the President's proposal.

Hundreds of thousands of Americans took to the streets, from the East to the West, the North to the South, all over America. Hundreds of thousands of people marched with a very simple demand to President Trump, which is that he follow the precedent and the policy that was pursued by the last nine Presidents, going back to Richard Nixon, for a half century of releasing his tax returns, something that President Trump promised to do as a President, saying he would do it after his audit was completed, and then he got into office and then just changed his mind and said this would be, I guess, another one of the broken promises that he would deliver to the American people.

So why is this a big deal? Why is it important that we get to see the President's taxes?

Well, America was conceived in popular democratic revolution against royalty, against monarchy, against aristocracy. We, as a people, overthrew a king who imposed tea taxes on small businesses, on the little people, but exempted his tycoon buddies in the East India Corporation, a king who constantly sweated the commoners with high taxes to pay for his lavish expenses and traveling jaunts and vacations around the world with the royal family and the royal court, a king who never paid any taxes and never disclosed his own entanglements with foreign governments. We rebelled against that kind of government.

We demand accountability. We demand transparency here.

Mr. President, please read the Constitution. We have no kings here. We have no slaves here. We have no czars here. We have no serfs here. We have equal citizens, free citizens with equal rights.

We allow no titles of nobility here, which is a point you might mention to your Secretary of State, who still carries that disgraceful title conferred upon him by Vladimir Putin, the Russian Order of Friendship.

In America, no one is above the law and all of us are subject to it. As Tom